

Claims

What is claimed is:

1. A method comprising the steps of:

- 5   a) selecting an article to be made,  
     b) holistically designing the article and the manufacturing process for making the article,  
      wherein the manufacturing process includes the use of a solid free-form fabrication process;  
      and  
     c) capturing the resulting designs of the article and the manufacturing process.

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2. The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of making the article by the  
manufacturing process in accordance with the captured designs of the article and the  
manufacturing process.

15   3. The method of claim 1, wherein the solid free-form fabrication process is the 3DP process.

4. The method of claim 1, wherein the solid free-form fabrication process is the SLS process.

5. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of capturing includes the use of at least one of the  
20   group consisting of electronic records, analog records, and manual writing.

6. A method comprising the steps of:

- a) selecting a class of articles to be made,

- b) holistically designing the class of articles and the manufacturing process for making the class of articles, wherein the manufacturing process includes the use of a solid free-form fabrication process; and
- c) capturing the resulting designs of the class of articles and the manufacturing process.

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7. The method of claim 6, further comprising the step of making at least one article that is a member of said class of articles by the manufacturing process in accordance with the captured designs of the class of articles and the manufacturing process.

10 8. The method of claim 6, wherein the solid free-form fabrication process is the 3DP process.

9. The method of claim 6, wherein the solid free-form fabrication process is the SLS process.

15 10. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of capturing includes the use at least one of the group consisting of electronic records, analog records, and manual writing.

11. The method of claim 6, wherein the step of capturing includes the use at least one of the group consisting of electronic records, analog records, and manual writing.

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